

MR. G. B. E. TRUSCOTT (*Chief Engineer, Roads, Buildings and Irrigation*): There is no allotment for that road in the budget for this year.

Use of the dip-rod in the weighment of cocoanut oil at the Arukutty Chowkey.

88. MR. POTTAYIL S. KRISHNA PANICKAR (*Shertala II*): Will the Government be pleased to state:

(a) whether dip-rod is now very freely used at the Arukutty Chowkey to ascertain the weight of cocoanut oil;

(b) if so, whether that is a sure test of measuring the contents of the barrel; and

(c) how the tare of these barrels is ascertained?

MR. C. O. MADHAVAN (*Excise Commissioner*): (a) Yes.

(b) It has been found in actual practice to be a reliable test though not so sure a test as actual weighment.

(c) when the dip-rod is used, the necessity for ascertaining the tare of barrels does not arise.

MR. POTTAYIL S. KRISHNA PANICKAR (*Shertala II*): With reference to the answer to part (a), may I know whether the cargo is actually weighed?

MR. C. O. MADHAVAN (*Excise Commissioner*): Oil in small quantities is actually weighed; but not oil filled in big drums and casks.

MR. POTTAYIL S. KRISHNA PANICKAR (*Shertala II*): May I know from the member whether big drums and casks are actually landed now in practice?

MR. C. O. MADHAVAN (*Excise Commissioner*): No, Sir.

MR. POTTAYIL S. KRISHNA PANICKAR (*Shertala II*): May I know from the member whether the actual weight can be ascertained unless they are landed?

MR. C. O. MADHAVAN (*Excise Commissioner*): The weight of barrels is ascertained by the use of the dip-rod and it has been found to be more or less correct, the variation being very little.

MR. POTTAYIL S. KRISHNA PANICKAR (*Shertala II*): Is there not a crane and platform erected for the landing of the cargo?

MR. C. O. MADHAVAN (*Excise Commissioner*): That is not for landing but for weighing big casks.

MR. POTTAYIL S. KRISHNA PANICKAR (*Shertala II*): May I know from the member whether that is in use now?

MR. C. O. MADHAVAN (*Excise Commissioner*): It is not in use now.

MR. POTTAYIL S. KRISHNA PANICKAR (*Shertala II*): May I know why?

MR. C. O. MADHAVAN (*Excise Commissioner*): That is a long story. I was told that there were, series of questions about it yesterday. The platform was constructed five or six years back. As soon as it was constructed the then Excise Commissioner wanted a notification to be published requiring the weight of the empty barrels to be

furnished. The weight of the casks with the oil alone can be ascertained by lifting the whole thing by the crane. What is thereby ascertained is the weight of the casks or barrels together with the contents and not of the barrel or of the contents alone. For that purpose, the proposal was to have the empty cask weighed and the weight registered before it was filled. For that, a notification was proposed to be published. Mr. Gomatinayagom Pillai, my predecessor, attended a meeting of the Travancore Chamber of Commerce when this question was discussed by the members of the Chamber. They raised a very strong objection to the proposal and said that it was not possible to register the empty casks in advance. That was because the planks may sustain damage and may have to be replaced before they are filled with oil, and therefore there will be an alteration in weight. So the members of the Chamber were opposed to the proposal; and as the idea was found to be impracticable, it was given up. The platform arrangement was not used on that ground.

MR. A. S. DAMODARAN ASAN (*Mavelikara*): It is stated that it is not a sure test and that there is likely to be a margin of error in the weighment by the dip-rod. May I know the margin of error?

MR. C. O. MADHAVAN (*Excise Commissioner*): It is very little, it is not even 1 per cent.

MR. A. S. DAMODARAN ASAN (*Mavelikara*): Is it necessary that the cargo should be landed for ascertaining the proper weight by means of the dip-rod?

MR. C. O. MADHAVAN (*Excise Commissioner*): No, it is not necessary that the cargo should be landed.

Defaulters among toddy shop contractors.

89 *MR. POTTAYIL S. KRISHNA PANICKAR (*Shertala II*): Will the Government be pleased to state:

(a) whether any defaulter for the contract period of 1106 and 1107 was given toddy shops in the subsequent period of 1108 and 1109; if so, the number of such defaulters who were given shops and the original total amount of the rental of the shops so defaulted;

(b) whether the previous defaulters who were given shops have again defaulted; if so, whether the shops so defaulted have been re-sold;

(c) if the answer to part (b) is in the affirmative, whether there is any difference in the rental by the resale; if so, the amount of the difference;

(d) whether this difference in the amount was realised from defaulting contractors; and

(e) if the answer to part (d) is in the negative, whether any of such amounts has been written off as unrealisable; if so, the total amount so written off during the contract period of 1108 and 1109?

MR. C. O. MADHAVAN (*Excise Commissioner*): (a) Yes. 16 defaulters for the contract period of 1106-1107 were given shops for the subsequent contract period of 1108-1109. The total original rental of the shops held during the 1106-1107 contract by such defaulters was Rs. 39,045-0-0.